HD **Work hard, play hard: selling Kelowna, BC, as year-round playground**

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A keen interest in place making and place selling is widespread in contemporary society. While the bulk of academic research has focused on studying the restructuring of large urban conglomerates, places beyond the exploding metropolis, by comparison, have received little attention, especially when it concerns Canadian landscapes. In an attempt to study the particularities of place making in contemporary smaller, more isolated communities-hinterlands-this work analyses the city of Kelowna, in British Columbia, Canada. We argue that historically Kelowna, a small rural community specialising in ranching, forestry and fruit production, since the early 1980s, has been re-imagined and re-designed, on the one hand as an all-year playground and as an innovative frontier for high-tech industries; on the other hand, this post-Fordist reinvention contains a discourse of 'whiteness', one that entices by packaging 'place' in terms of 'sameness' and 'familiarity'.

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In contrast to large cosmopolitan post-industrial cities, hinterland-type cities are invented, sought and lived as geographies cleared from the 'elements' that make cities 'unsafe'.

L'étude de la fabrication et de la vente du lieu suscite beaucoup d'Intérêt dans la société contemporaine. Alors que la plupart des travaux académiques se sont concentrés sur la restructuration des grandes agglomérations urbaines, leurs périphéries qui font parti du paysage canadien ont reçu peu d'attention. Afin de comprendre les processus qui entre enjeu dans la fabrication du lieu des communautés plus petites et plus isolées de l'arrière-pays, nous avons étudié la ville de Kelowna en Colombie Britannique au Canada. Notre argument est qu'une petite communauté avec un riche passé agricole et une économie basée sur l'exploitation de ressources naturelles, Kelowna s'est re-imaginée et re-définie, dans un premier temps comme site de villégiature toute saison, et aussi comme centre de recherche de haute technologie. Dans un deuxième temps, cette ré-invention post-fordiste contient un discours de «whiteness» qui encourage la création d'un espace socialement homogène. En contrepartie au post-industrialisme des grands centres métropolitains, les villes de l'arrière-pays sont inventées, recherchées et vécus comme des lieus géographiques où il fait bon vivre, ou les dangers généralement associés aux grandes villes y sont absents. Notre but est donc de comprendre le caractère unique qui contribue à la fabrication du lieu dans les sociétés de l'arrière-pays.

Landscapes can be deceptive, Sometimes a landscape seems to be less a setting for the life of its inhabitants than a curtain behind which their struggles, achievements and accidents take place. For those who, with the inhabitants, are behind the curtain, landmarks are no longer only geographic but also biographical and personal. (Berger 1997)

But all cities are ideas, ultimately. (Franzen 1988)

Introduction

The shift to post-Fordism over the last decades has transformed place and space, and the experiences of place and urbanity (Harvey 1989). As employment is being redefined and work re-organised, the easy divisions of urban, suburban and rural areas of the sixties and seventies have given way to more fluid and 'flexible' manners of apprehending place. The effects of the new forms of capital accumulation in this most recent era have been uneven at economic, social and urban levels. As a result, local bourgeoisies and civic boosters display discursive strategies of 'spatial revalorisations' to attract capital and new businesses into their localities, trying, in the process, to stymie the further de-industrialisation and social erosion of places once highly reliant on Fordist industries and Keynesian labour market policies (Harvey 1989; Davis 1992). In Goodwin's (1993) words, 'urban images or "city myths" are produced in order to promote investment potential more generally'. The rise of time-space compression technologies (Harvey 1989) and the repositioning of places in a new international division of consumption are making these campaigns even more pressing.

Not surprisingly, different places are reinvented differently (Sassen 1990; Urry 2002; Judd 2003). While the bulk of academic research has focused on studying the restructuring of large urban conglomerates, from the redefinition of the ghetto to the emergence of the global city apparatus (Sassen 1990; Marcuse 2002), places beyond the exploding metropolis and intensifying edge cities, by comparison, have gotten little attention, especially when it concerns Canadian landscapes.1 In this work, we examine the city of Kelowna, in British Columbia, Canada, during the last two decades, as we identify this non-metropolitan hinterland city of one hundred thousand inhabitants as exhibiting a particular type of the phenomenon of making and selling place. Specifically, we do this by examining four overlapping discourses, which together set up an overarching discourse for post-Fordist Kelowna. These construct Kelowna as an ideal retirement location; as a playground; as a place of 'whiteness'; and, finally, as a site for advanced technology. We argue that the reinvention of Kelowna has been organised in time through discourses that are, in part, clever marketing gimmicks that emphasise place, play and fun. Furthermore, the post-Fordist reinvention of the city and its surroundings contains a discourse of 'whiteness' (Frankenberg 1993; Dyer 1997). Thus, Kelowna is systematically presented in terms of 'sameness' and 'familiarity' to normalise its landscape and to draw particular types of people and businesses into the community; people and businesses sharing a 'white' identity, from high-tech specialists, to 'family-oriented' people, to retirees. We claim that this particular hinterland city is invented, sought and lived as a 'safe' landscape, a landscape without the 'elements' that make cities 'unsafe' (Kobayashi and Peake 2000). Hinterlands outside metropolitan areas such as Kelowna have been historically formed in such a way that today they constitute a place with a unique character, a unique 'quality', a unique attraction; one that offers safety, familiarity and sameness. Here, then, lays the value of our analysis; its possibilities in shedding light on the specific character of making place in hinterlandtype cities. We approach this case study of Kelowna through a discourse analysis of government documents, local newspapers, brochures, guidebooks, pamphlets, advertisements and interviews with developers, city planners, local politicians and journalists.

Place Making, Place Selling

From the early 1970s on in North America, it had become clear that the areas and industries that had flourished under Fordist principles were in serious decline (Davis 1992; Vosko 2000; Luxton and Corman 2001). Post-Fordism resulted in the restructuring of vast areas, including concerted efforts by regions to out-sell themselves in competition with one another in seeking this goal. Indeed, restructuring has emerged hand-in-hand with a neo-liberal hegemony in such a way that discourses of free-market economics and market forces as sole determining sources of social, political and economic action have emerged with considerable populist appeal. In this way, privatisation and deregulation have become fundamental state policies, while local urban infrastructures increasingly turn to the manipulation of the market for solutions to social and economic ailments, and for seeking out new opportunities for profit making. Crisis and opportunities for profit intersect with the hegemony of neo-liberalism, with its emphasis on privatisation, individualism and its new ethics of meanness (Mills 1997; Sears 1999). Moreover, market forces are now legitimate as 'the only possible way' for reviving the economy, while a new set of political agencies replaces the local government to 'ensure that such rhetoric is put into practise' (Goodwin 1993). In turn, the system of public agencies that were once a key component of urban governance and welfare are now viewed as rigid, gripped by a poor work ethic and fiscally irresponsible (Goodwin 1993; McElligott 2001; Krahn and Lowe 2002). The role of the local state has shifted from management of the city's economy and infrastructure to aggressive entrepreneurialism, whereby today local governments actively recruit and solicit capital settlement to the areas under their jurisdiction (Harvey 2001). Consequently, many locations moved into 'a frenzy of competition to improve their respective positions within the spatial division of both production and consumption' (Goodwin 1993). Often, they do so by offering incentives to business, sometimes they offer a 'docile' workforce and other times a 'creative' one. More specifically, the promotion of place by the local state translates into a 'subsidisation' of industries (Ward 1998). In fact, for Ward it might be more appropriate to see these strategies as 'buying of industries rather than the selling of places'. Keil and Kipfer (2003) write of the 'competitive city' at work, which means the development of local policy prioritising the 'making [of] cities [as] competitive locations for investment, export, tourists and elite

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residents'. In their view, the 'success' of these initiatives often comes at the expense of rolling back the achievements of organised social movements on things like citizen participation, social housing and environmental standards. In fact, the restructuring that is taking place in the post-Fordist world has moved forward against the backdrop of cultural and aesthetic changes, a break-up of collective identities and the re-fashioning of individual aesthetics and identities. It is from this process that issues of style and visual stimulation overtake mass industrial culture: 'The selling of an urban lifestyle.. .becomes part and parcel of an increasingly sophisticated commodification of everyday life, in which images and myths are relentlessly packaged and presented until they become 'hyper-real', whereby any distinction between the 'real' and the 'representation' is effaced' (Goodwin 1993). Places have been commodified and turned into products to be sold in the marketplace (Davis 1992; Holcomb 1993; Fainstein and Judd 1999; Urry 2002). Places, say Philo and Kearns,

are not so much presented as foci of attachment and concern, but as bundles of social and economic opportunity competing against one another in the open (and unregulated) market for a share of the capital investment cake (whether this be the investment of enterprises, tourists, local consumers or whatever). In this discourse, places become 'commodified'. (Philo and Kearns 1993; emphasis in original)

Places, then, are to be consumed. For this, they must be rendered attractive, advertised and marketed in the same way as any other commodity.

Nonetheless, a number of questions arise from the commodification of places and the competition between producers of place. How to 'sell' a place in an exceedingly competitive market? Who does 'sell' place? How is place constructed as a commodity for sale? Is it solely place that is sold? Or, is it also a bundle of social relations fetishised to be sold as place? Florida (2002) approaches these questions by arguing that a new social class is emerging in our times, what he calls the 'Creative Class'. This class has 'shaped and continues to shape deep and profound shifts in the way we work, in our values and desires, and in the very fabric of our everyday lives' (Florida 2002). According to him, the creative class has the power to attract capital. His view is that instead of jobs forcing people to relocate, companies relocate or form where skilled, creative people are already settled and are already thriving. For Florida, the creative class is 'the norm-setting class of our times'. Its norms are based on 'individuality, self-expression, and openness to difference'. Hence, for him the essential question is to know what type of place has the 'quality' that makes it appealing to the creative class. This class is formed, among others, by people with specialisations as varied as science, engineering, architecture, design, education, arts, music and entertainment. As the economic function of this class is 'to create ideas, new technologies, and new creative content' in a variety of areas and as in their work, the members of the creative class must engage in challenging and complex problem solving that requires a great deal of independent judgement, high levels of education. Factors like autonomy, openness and flexibility are essential in their lives. For Florida, this constitutes 'quality of place' (italics in original). The elements of such a place are a 'combination of the built environment and the natural environment; a proper setting for pursuit of creative lives.. .[a place that offers] the vibrancy of street life, café culture, arts, music and.. .outdoor activities-altogether a lot of active, exciting, creative endeavours'. In sum, Florida emphasises a love for 'diversity', from having access to 'ethnic' food and culture, to having contact and working with people from different parts of the world, to welcoming gay and lesbian 'lifestyles', both at work and in the social scene. But Florida is too optimistic on the Openness' of the creative class, leaving unexamined the economic and ideological gap that develops between core (the creative class) and peripheral workers in the post-Fordist workplace (Harvey 1989; Legge 1995; Moody 1997). In addition, he is positively convinced that the new petite bourgeoisie is inviting, accommodating and open to 'difference'. However, 'fear of the other', as Harvey reminds us (Harvey 1996; also see below), crosscuts class. Confronted with Florida's argument then, we wonder whether hinterland-type cities would ever be able to offer the quality of place that, he says, appeals to the creative class. If they do not, especially in 'skill-deficient' locations, what would make these places enticing to capital and new businesses anyways? Below, we showcase Kelowna's attempt to entice and secure capital.

Harvey suggests that globalisation and the rise of time-space compression have resulted in the collapse of 'certain kinds of spatial barriers' undermining Older and seemingly secure material and territorial definitions of place' (Harvey 1996). He argues that this collapse leads to an interrogation of 'metaphorical and psychological meanings' of place and simultaneously to inventions of new material practices corresponding to new definitions of place. Accordingly, '[f]ear of the "other" who now seems so threateningly close everywhere around the globe can, for example, lead to all sorts of exclusionary territorial behaviour'. To the fear of a fast-changing world and to the fear of the Other', Harvey connects the renewed importance given to institutions such as family and community, and the interest in common historical roots (Harvey 1989). In fact, an important aspect for the making of place is the element of continuity with the past in the re-imagining of the present. Even within the extreme cases of social revolutions where radical breaks of existing social structure have taken place, the definitions and imageries that have emerged to solidify the new order rarely disregard previous history

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(Kagarlitsky 1988). Indeed, the material and the symbolic are part of the political economy of space. As Daniels and Cosgrove (1992) argue, landscapes 'may be represented in a variety of materials and on many surfaces. . .indeed the meaning of verbal, visual and built landscapes have a complex interwoven history'. Thus, it is common for new definitions and imaginations of places to incorporate the past into the present. In general, we can safely say that new discourses about place(s) are, to a large extent, updated discourses of a dominant historical and place-specific narrative. In other words, new definitions of place make sense only in relation to other discourses operating or suppressed in the background (Till 1993).

Hinterland places cannot compete with larger conglomerates on historical buildings and cultural artefacts of the kind depicted in the global city literature (Sassen 1990). But they can resort to historical social relations and to 'nature' to construct place. In the past, water, beaches and mountains were defined as having medicinal qualities that were regenerative. Today, pleasure is what defines these features of a place (Inglis 2000; Florida 2002; Urry 2002). Scenery, air quality and playgrounds are sold in contraposition to old industries and historical monuments.

But who are the individuals who inhabit and navigate the post-Fordist, neo-liberal place of the hinterlands? While Fordism was contingent upon, and resulted in a 'new man' (sic), in other words, in a middle class of technocrats (Ross 1999), the ideal type individual of the post-Fordist and neoliberal era is constructed as individualistic, isolated, self-made and cerebral (Reich 1991; Brooks 2000; Florida 2002). These are the new classes in the high-tech sector, for example, the creative class of Florida's analysis. This class fraction needs different work discipline than other social classes to entice them to move to a place. It is in this context that a renewed emphasis has been levied, for example, on the entertainment and cultural industries (Sassen and Roost 1999; Florida 2002; Judd 2003). Therefore, many new spaces of cultural consumption have been built in cities across North America to attract the new high-tech class and the capital that depends on it. These may include concert halls, art galleries, highbrow restaurants and cultural expositions (Zukin 1995; Hannigan 1998; Tator et al. 1998). However, this focus is part of a larger package of promotions and enticements based on 'lifestyles'. But this interpretation misses the re-presenting of the natural environment as source of pleasure and a component of lifestyle, if not in large cosmopolitan cities, at least in the hinterlands. It is Bourdieu who suggests that the new petite bourgeoisiewhat we have referred to as the new middle class of high-tech employees, or new service class,2 or 'creative class'-has distinct economic and cultural capitals, and that this is evident in their approach to pleasure. While the old bourgeoisie invested its life purpose in 'morality' and 'duty', and 'a fear of pleasure' and associated 'every satisfaction of the forbidden impulses with guilt', the new petite bourgeoisie, in contrast, 'urges a morality of pleasure as a duty'. Fun thus becomes a central goal in life. As Bourdieu also points out, 'pleasure is not only permitted but demanded, on ethical as much as on scientific grounds' (Bourdieu in Urry 2002).

In sum, as city boosters in hinterland-type places cannot entice a creative class with the cultural richness3 and the diversity of the large cosmopolitan conglomerates, they resort to unique aspects of those localities to create attractive and enticing packages for the selling of place. They sell place mostly in the form of beauty, nature, climate, hills and water. But most importantly, they sell sameness, familiarity and continuity with the past (Webber 1999).

The Hinterland Character of the Okanagan

Historically, the Canadian hinterlands articulated with Canadian and continental capitalism through the exploitation of raw materials and of agricultural products for exporting to foreign markets and metropolises. Innis (1930) called these raw materials 'staples' including fish, pulp and paper and minerals. The location of these staples was frequently geographically distant from the centres of industrial, political and financial power. Thus, hinterlands were connected to power through a particular transportation infrastructure of canals, ports and pipelines and of political and economic decisions (Clement 2001). There was, however, nothing automatic about this type of economy. Its occurrence and shape was the result of an intertwining of forces of geography, institutions, technology, transportation systems and power relations (Hayter and Barnes 2001). Dunk (1991) points out that the hinterlands have been very much part of the nation-building history of this country. In his study of white working-class men in Thunder Bay, Ontario, he found that they used the concept of 'hinterland' to identify themselves as distinct from the social arrogance and politics of the metropolis (i.e., Toronto) in southern Ontario.

Later, the rise and spread of Fordism to more and more areas in Canada resulted in the growth and transformation of the centre-hinterland network. An increasing number of communities were established away from the centres of economic and political power, away from the large urban conglomerates that contained them (Luxton 1980; Clement 1981). A Fordist economy flourished in this context. Fordism was a system characterised by a state that catered to the formation of a market for relatively protected manufacturing, a

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corporalist understanding of the cold war and the ethics of a limited welfare state and social reform. This resulted in high wages and unionisation for largely white male workforces (Vosko 2000). The adoption of this policy, concomitant with one of nation-making centred on immigration and multiculturalism, brought many white immigrants to Canada. These were recruited for jobs in Fordist industries concentrated in the large manufacturing cities. However, some of these economic activities extended into the hinterlands (Luxton 1980; Pentland 1981; Dunk 1991; Fiorito 1999), while others were 'native' to such places. The restructuring of the Canadian Fordist economy since the 1980s, which included the rethinking of the ethics of the welfare and multicultural state, have had recasting effects on the hinterlands, with a constant decline in economic activity.4 The combination of post-Fordism, neo-liberalism and globalisation has brutally altered the province of British Columbia and more so its hinterlands (Jewitt 2000; Howlett and Brownsey 2001; Fawcett 2003). However, neo-liberalism is certainly more than merely a destructive process; it has a capacity to interact with institutional reforms in an ambiguous destructive and creative character (Brenner and Theodore 2002; Peck and Tickell 2002). This destructive character has not been restricted to resource industries, but also to the thin manufacturing base that existed prior to neo-liberal restructuring. Amid this restructuring then, how and to what extent is the crisis of Fordism challenging the place of the hinterland within the dominant discourse of nation-building? And further, how are the hinterlands, their local dominant classes, reinventing themselves to remain viable as profit-making locations in this period of globalisation and time-space compression? We move to a study of Kelowna to try to answer some of these questions.

Kelowna as Retirement Location

Kelowna grew as one of these hinterland communities, relatively isolated from the major centres of political and economic power, and with its population connected mainly to fruit-growing and other agricultural activities. Until the end of the 1970s, the Okanagan Valley can be depicted as an amalgamation of fairly small and isolated groups of communities, an area where the main economic production was tied to 'nature', agriculture, fruit production and forestry, while at the same time, this 'nature' attracted vacationers who stayed in the increasing number of hotels and cottages that dotted the area (Webber 1999; Thomson 2000). For a long time, vacationers had visited the area from Vancouver, Calgary, Edmonton and the Prairies. Written sources about Kelowna and the collective memory of long-time residents speak of a bucolic outdoors that allowed vacationers to replenish their energies and heal their (white) bodies (Bennett n.d.; Hobson 2000; Wilson 2000). In this sense, Kelowna has long been a 'resort city' organised around Lake Okanagan. But, Kelowna's climate and its 'sunshine', as it has been mythically constructed, has also been a factor in attracting retirees. Worldwide retirement is a relatively new social phenomenon. In some societies, the concept does not even exist. This significant development, both at an international level and in the Canadian political economy, is connected to the expansion of the welfare state. The ability of growing numbers of the ageing populations to stop working and 'retire' has been experienced by relatively few generations. It was with the creation of the welfare state, and the power of unions in the Fordist system, that retirement became increasingly an expectation for lower-middle and working-class Canadians. Pensions as right rather than as charity (means tested relief) became government policy with the implementation of the Canada Pension Plan and the Guaranteed Income Supplement in 1967 as part of the development of a Keynesian welfare state responding to a mature Fordist economy. The government of Canada itself places the possibility of a life over the poverty line for retirees only in the early 1970s. Indeed, for people who had spent their lives in alienated work, this was an opportunity to do what they pleased, within their means. Kelowna is a well-known retirement city in Canada. For years, its economy has benefited from this new social phenomenon as investors saw in retirement a business opportunity and the city became specialised in this activity. Since the eighties, the population of Kelowna has grown partly around a retirement industry that caters to white Anglo-Saxon populations. The last census shows that the Central Okanagan (including Lake Country, Kelowna, Westside and Peachland) has grown 60 percent faster than the Province of British Columbia. The population of 147,739 also has more people over the age of fifty-five. While in British Columbia as a whole 13 percent of the people are sixty-five years or older, in the Central Okanagan the rate reaches 18 percent (Government of British Columbia 2001). Retirement in Kelowna, as in other parts of North America, has become increasingly commodified. Housing is one of the aspects of the commodification of retirement.

In Kelowna, there are many openly advertised 'adult-only' buildings (Momer 1998; Grant 2003). These buildings accept people over forty-five or fifty years of age, claiming that seniors have the right to peace. It is seen to be legitimate to segregate out younger people from these housing compounds under this concept. Ed Hall, from the Canadian Adult Communities Developers' Group, was one of the first to target housing specifically for seniors and retirees in 1980 (Hall 2000). It was at that time that walled 'communities' sprang up rapidly across the city, a phenomenon that shows no signs of receding. Residents of these compounds have marked out the concept of 'segregation' as a positive living concept. Some of them argue, for example, that walled communities provide them with little outside maintenance work, or that this type of housing concept enables them (the wealthier in the group) to migrate south for part of the year without worrying about the

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security of their homes. Some see in the common room, a feature of most of these compounds, a place to socialise and meet other people, and in the enclosing walls of the compounds, a barrier to the noise of the street and its 'danger'. The wall-community concept gives retirees a strong sense of safety (Hall 2000). The fear of crime, another commodified urban social development of the last decades, has intersected the interests of the industries of retirement with those of security very well (Flusty 2004). Constructors (called euphemistically 'developers') have manoeuvred to build these walled and isolated environments for 'safety and protection' not only for the elderly, but for the general population as well (Davis 1992; Blakely and Snyder 1997; Momer 1998; Grant 2003; Low 2003). The aesthetics of the city today are marked by walled 'communities' coexisting with other forms of housing, gated fortresses that are dominant in the newly 'developed' neighbourhoods. Even those in City Council who oppose walled communities have been unable to stop their development. As Councilor Robert Hobson suggests, the best they can do is encourage developers to 'efface' the walls by clever landscaping and shrubbery (Hobson 2000).

The retirement industry has copied the techniques of tourism and entertainment to sell the outdoors and sport as fun for the retirees, as they must create a new life in their segregated communities away from family and other age groups. Golf courses have sprung up all over the city, many of them with programs targeting exclusively the elderly. What began as somewhat small operations in the Okanagan Valley today fit well with the new ideas of retirement. The idyllic image of retirement includes the outdoors, a never-ending playground, a pre-work, child- and adolescent-like life. Golfing is presented as a suitable type of outdoor sport for retired people, a good way to spend leisure time, a good way to have fun. Despite the ecological absurdity of placing golf courses in the arid region of the Okanagan, these enterprises are today prominent in the area.5 When one drives early in the morning to go to work through the many golf courses spread out through the city and vicinity, the aesthetic is one of perfect green lawns filled with sprinkles of 'white', grey-haired people at work in their fun and exercise. The retirement industry thus sells Kelowna and the Okanagan as an ongoing vacation for a particular type of retiree. Kelowna is imagined as the Hawaii of Canada-a mild, secure, predictable, familiar and fun environment (Momer 1998; Neering 2000). It is also lived as a 'white' space.

Kelowna as Playground for (White) Bodies

With time, as the retirement system broadened and as the concept of choice-'lifestyle'-became ingrained as the ultimate goal of a consumerist society, what golf encapsulates became naturally expanded as the desired model, the desired 'lifestyle' for other age groups in the area. A number of sports and outdoor activities, such as skiing, hiking, golfing and sailing, articulate and complement golf as the chosen 'lifestyle' for younger populations that have made the Okanagan their home in the last decades (Coleman 1996). As Ron Matuisi, Director of Planning of the City of Kelowna puts it: 'the groups that are coming in now tend to be national, international, fifty-fiveplus semi-retired to retired. They are coming to live in a golf community or something like that' (The Province 2001). But golf isn't all, skiing too is a prominent marker of the Okanagan's lifestyle, a schema that has been very successful in the process of selling Kelowna to a particular type of younger Canadians. As pointed out by Bourdieu, in late capitalism, some outdoor activities, such as skiing and golfing, have served to reproduce a trend where fun is both seen as a fundamental goal in life and represented as symbiotic with commodified forms of outdoors and physical activity (Bourdieu in Urry 2002). Class and 'race' intervene in determining for whom fun and outdoor activities become a 'fundamental goal in life'.

As in other parts of British Columbia, the transnational companies of leisure have made of the ski slopes of the Okanagan a fast-growing industry. As Whitson (2001) emphasises, until a few decades ago, ski hills in the southern interior of British Columbia and other parts of Canada were small operations that survived from year to year, and changed owners often. However, he adds, as business and new professional classes grew in cities like Vancouver and Seattle, a demand for skiing on the BC slopes developed. At that point, large operators began to invest and to amplify ski resorts, making more runs accessible to the public, opening new and more upscale restaurants and other après-ski activities (Whitson 2001). The resorts in the Okanagan were part of this trend. In 1985, an Australian-based conglomerate bought Big White Ski Resort; a resort located 70 km from Kelowna. In 1999, the same operation acquired Silver Star Ski Resort, not more than 60 km away from Kelowna (Morning Star, 9 November 2001). With large capital, lobbying and symbolic power, these investments in turn transformed and improved the transportation system giving visitors better and faster access to the Okanagan Valley and its hills. In the early 1990s, the carving out of the mountains and the building of a safer, wider and more direct highway system from Vancouver into Kelowna and the Okanagan enhanced access to the city and region. Through this highway, the interior became better connected with the coastal cities of Vancouver in Canada and Seattle in the US, both approximately a five-hour drive from Kelowna. The city's airport also grew at a significant pace in the 1990s (Neering 2000; Daily Courier, 8 April 2001; Whitson 2001). Better and faster access has made of this hinterland city a place of and for consumption, a 'fun' city.

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But play is not really the only appeal for resettlement and new economic activity in Kelowna and its surrounding areas. By the late 1990s, the population of Kelowna had reached almost 100,000 people. This population, conservative and white, when not retired, worked in the unskilled and poorly paid occupations of the tourist and retirement industry, in regional retailing and agriculture, and in the old Fordist industries of lumber, manufacturing and assembly (Daily Courier, 9 February 1997). A couple of large companies had set their headquarters in Kelowna. Almost by accident, Western Star Trucks grew to become the largest semi tractor-trailer maker in North America from its Kelowna location, and Flightcraft, located at the Kelowna airport, expanded in the airplane maintenance industry to a considerable size. In these industries, unionisation ensured that wages were relatively high. Still, to a large extent, the area was a repository of poorly paid and unskilled workers who were subject to the cyclical effects of capitalist competition in retirement, tourism, forestry and orcharding (Coffey 1996; Daily Courier, 9 February 1997).

Kelowna as a White Space

Mitchell (2000) writes that those who control the production of space also possess the 'ability to actively create race' (emphasis in the original). Consequently, '"race itself"-that social reification, that ideology masquerading as nature-is made "real" on the ground through the maintenance of spatial boundaries'. But how exactly is 'race' made real? Certainly, legislation can perform this function as in the case of Apartheid in South Africa, for example. But laws cannot detail the common sense impact and functioning of 'race' as natural and as lived daily. Hoelscher (2003) demonstrates in his case study of Mississippi that Jim Crow laws of spatial and racial segregation were only one form of the workings of racism. Other practices, as intensely discriminatory and exclusionary, were reproduced On the ground' by the erection of racialised and spatial boundaries. Through his analysis of the Natchez Pilgrimage-touring the homes of the wealthy in Mississippi-Hoelscher (2003) shows how racial segregation was 'largely based on custom' and this was 'deeply embedded in daily life' via cultural productions that articulated and reinforced it. Thus, the regional memory of Southern whiteness was exclusionary and 'colour' went unspoken as it operated in coded custom and taken-for-granted norms. The point here is that whiteness is not just a numerical superiority tied to political power in the pursuit of legislation to embed this advantage. Whiteness is also an ideological frame of mind that defines who one is and is not, as well as influences how one lives and experiences racialised social activities that have little or nothing to do with the inscription of 'racial' discrimination in law. In other words, racism is an everyday experience not reliant on official legal/documentation for powerful exclusionary practises because it is woven into the customs, norms and representations of the every day.

The history of the Okanagan is of making space white. From the beginning stages of colonisation, white British and Scots 'settled' in the area and recruited fellow countrymen to join them in reproducing an enclave of the British Empire here. Remittance men settled here after serving in the British military. Their reward for 'service' was the best land in the Valley (Hobson 2000). At the same time, Aboriginals were displaced, corralled and 'gated' in 'Native spaces' (Harris 2002), while other non-white groups were actively resisted from moving into the region (Roy 1989, 2003; Bourgeois 2004). There is then, in the history of Kelowna, a conscious attempt to make space white. Today, this marking of white space is as overt even if communicated through different outlets. Whiteness is arrogantly depicted in the publicity, promotions, media and rhetoric of place marketing of Kelowna.

The prominence of whiteness remains today reflected in official data on the social characteristics of Kelowna residents. In a revealing distribution by ethnic origin, comparing the Regional District of Central Okanagan (RDCO) with the rest of British Columbia in 1996, it appears that only 0.7 percent of the Central Okanagan residents are of Chinese origin, compared with 13.5 percent for the province, while the population of 'East Indian' origin is 1.8 percent against 5.8 percent for the Province (Statistics Canada 2001). Furthermore, of a population approaching 100,000, less than 4 percent (3.8 percent) are visible minorities in Kelowna, which compares poorly not only with Vancouver (36.8 percent), Squamish (16.8 percent), but also with the rest of hinterland BC where the percentage of visible minorities is 5.7 percent (Walton-Roberts 2004). Ideologically, Kelowna makes no apologies for its white space, as Stone (2001) reminds us: 'Kelowna has a reputation of being a conservative place intolerant of difference: it is in the middle of an area widely regarded as both the "bible belt" and fertile ground for the spread of white supremacist ideology'.

Over the last two decades, population growth in Kelowna (and the Okanagan more generally) has remained on the increase. It is believed that most people come from within the province to settle in Kelowna as a midway point from Vancouver, or simply as a preferred residential place for various reasons, including its 'rurality', short distances to work, less noise and traffic (Nicholl 2002). One of the sources for this growth has been 'white flight' from Vancouver. In the 1980s and 1990s, a large flow of immigrants from Asia, and especially Hong Kong, arrived in Vancouver (Smart and Smart 1996). In some city quarters, an anti-immigrant backlash

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emerged with many 'whites' choosing to manifest their protest by leaving the city. Kelowna was one of the most popular destinations for this type of migration. As one of our interviewees points out:

Yes, the white people moved out. I have some relatives out there, it's the 'HongCouver' kind of thing, and you know they couldn't stand the Asian influx. So you would get those types of people that are less tolerant and they would come out here. You get the Albertan culturally (I don't know how diverse Alberta is) but it was more of the white people that moved out here, and it became more and more. I don't know, but, if you come in here as a person of colour, and you look around, you might think that this isn't going to be the best place-without anyone ever saying any thing to you. (Munro 200O)6

Much of the racialisation of space is woven in custom and taken-for-granted norms that orient people's daily lives (Hoelscher 2003). In Kelowna, we see this in the multitude of promotional literature distributed to prospective investors and other organisations. Pictures in these documents are almost exclusively of white people, almost always of heterosexual couples showing off their blond, blue-eyed children. This is evident in the propaganda produced by developers who are selling some of the wealthier new subdivisions in Kelowna. One of the largest of these is Kettle Valley, an expensive development surrounded by pines in the southern part of the city, promoted as a place where you can 'come home to traditional values' (http://www.kettlevalley.com/home.php).

Berger (1972) and Urry (2002) point out that a primary function of promotional tourist literature is an invitation for the readers to imagine themselves in such locations, to see themselves in the places being represented in the photographs included in those promotional pieces. It is in this sense that we argue that whiteness is depicted in the 'familiarity' and 'sameness' of the faces, places and customs of those represented in the brochures of the area. At the same time, the illustrations communicate who is uninvited, unwelcome in the city, since there are no representations of people who are 'different' and 'unfamiliar' to the landscape. Both white and non-white groups recognise these 'signs' and either join those already in Kelowna, or have learned to stay away. There are many examples of these 'signs' and we refer the reader back to the Kettle Valley Housing website for further evidence. The whiteness of Kelowna is also well illustrated in the following example of an advertisement from the Summerhill Estate Winery in the BC Wine Trails Vintage (2000) (Figure 1). The advertisement depicts two young black women smiling and toasting with champagne at a celebration for the year Y2K. The winery has chosen to place a caption above these two women that reads, 'Find out why we are recognised as the most unique winery in the world!' What is it that makes the winery unique? Could it be that the two young, well-dressed, smiling women, toasting with their wine glasses are non-white? It is remarkable that the strategy used by this winery to distinguish itself as unique is one that shows that the Okanagan is all about whiteness, as it is a unique experience to have non-white guests for a New Year's celebration.

Kelowna as Silicon Vineyard

During the 1990s, in the midst of the microchip reindustrialisation of parts of North America, the city of Kelowna and the Regional District of the Central Okanagan initiated a concerted effort to compete for survival in the post-Fordist environment. The symbolism of Kelowna as a fun, playful and natural environment was essential for this effort. In some forms, it was a successful effort. The Okanagan was portrayed as a high-tech area by profiling two or three high-tech companies that were fast growing in the production of software in the area. The Okanagan High-Tech Council took the lead in organising the Third Annual Okanagan Tech Symposium, which focused on creating 'Tech Investment for the Okanagan Valley'. Some 800 delegates attended, including the now Premier of British Columbia, neo-liberal Gordon Campbell (Field notes, 9 March 2001). In April 2001, a few months before one of the three high-tech companies featured as representative of the tech boom in the area declared bankruptcy, the Globe and Mail's Report on Business (ROB) presented the Okanagan as one of the five new Tech Boomtowns in Canada (Turner 2001).7 Its author, Turner, affirmed that these five cities

have in common the...ability to prosper, just below the radar, in the face of a daunting market for technology companies and workers, and the gutting of many of the highest-profile dot-corns. We picked these places too, because of their natural resources. In each case, the raw material is brainpower, the kind that flows out of major universities and research institutions (one Calgary high-tech CEO refers to this as the digital economy's 'feedstock'). Each of them has grown along high-bandwidth cables and near airports with quick links to larger centres-the digital corollaries of shipping lines and ports (Turner 2001).

More important, the five high-tech clusters had grown in areas rich in an intangible and highly subjective 'resource'-'quality of life'. Simply put, the argument was that tech entrepreneurs were establishing their businesses in places where they wanted to live. But still, what was there in Kelowna to attract these clusters? After all, Calgary in Alberta and Victoria in British Columbia are much larger cities and, to some extent, offered the 'quality of place' sought by the creative class; Waterloo, Ontario, on the other hand, had a large university

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which has been at the forefront of high-technology development and training; and Fredericton, New Brunswick, had the provincial government's support and financing to establish a high-tech sector. The choice of the Okanagan could not really be a matter of costs. Housing costs in Kelowna in 2001 were similar to Waterloo's and higher than in Fredericton, even comparable to Calgary's. The high-tech labour force in Kelowna at the beginning of the new century is no larger than 2,500 people, and average salaries for project managers were at $71,000 (Turner 2001). These wages were similar to salaries in Fredericton and Victoria. Indeed, it is not surprising that the high-tech sector in Kelowna was a bit of a mirage, as the GDP for the sector in 2001 was $240 million compared to the $2 billion for Waterloo and one billion dollars for Victoria. And the high-tech companies in Kelowna are much fewer and less important when compared to Telus, Shaw, Research in Motion, PIX Stream, and Descartes in Calgary, Uniphase in Victoria and CGI and others in Fredericton. More so, who could compare the financial systems and venture capital in Kelowna with that found in all the other cities. And, it was difficult to parallel their universities with Okanagan University College, which at that time was a small institution that emphasised teaching over research and cutting edge technology.8

Thus, what is it that the Globe and Mail's ROB tried to sell when it presented Kelowna as one of the five new Tech Boomtowns in the country? The newspaper of record in Canada could emphasise only 'play' and 'security' for family life in its selling effort of Kelowna as a High-Tech city, two characteristics that seem unrelated to high-tech developments. Those aspects are apparently far more appropriate for selling post-Fordist views on tourism and retirement than for advancing the technology industry. However, the Globe and Mail resorted to notions promoted by the regional and city campaigns and the local press (Debruyn 1998) to emphasise the discursive idea of a Silicon Vineyard, evoking, on the one hand, Silicon Valley and the tech-boom of the times, and on the other, nature as bucolically represented by the fetishisation of wine production. The Globe and Mail author actually made a connection between the outdoors and play, nature and entertainment in his effort to represent this place. Turner, the journalist who did the research, writes, 'the Silicon Vineyard has lush orchards, mountains and two major ski hills-Big White and Silver Star-within one hour drive', adding that this made the city attractive, a place where one might choose to live. In his words, '[s]imple as it may sound, likin' livin' here is largely why Kelowna finds itself blessed with a rapidly growing hightech sector' (Turner 2001). Turner interviewed Chief Executive Officers of Tech companies in the Okanagan, who declared to have come to the area because of 'lifestyle'. In fact, two of them, Mr. Al Hildebrandt, of a company called Total CareTechnologies, and Mr. Jack Van der Star, owner of Galleon Wireless Broadband, declared to have chosen the Okanagan because they wanted to retire in the area. In turn, Tom Taylor, who sold his company to Packateer, a larger tech company, pointed out that he 'was tired of living in Vancouver". Claims of this sort are difficult to interpret, but they have often been hidden codes for wanting to 'escape' the changing nature of cities. In the case of Vancouver in the recent years, they apply to 'white flight' and those seeking to escape 'Asianisation', a new version of the tense racist environment that has historically characterised the province (Li 1994; Smart and Smart 1996).

But, choice in 'lifestyle' was not the only image Kelowna offered as reasons for being chosen as a high-tech city. Images of masculinity and conquest were also invoked. In fact, the promotional pieces on the new industries in Kelowna described high-tech capitalists as 'pioneers', who were forging a new future for the people and the region. The discourse suggested the idea of a 'special entrepreneurial' spirit in the investors group, with the power to energise the whole city, and thus responsible for injecting a broader entrepreneurial climate and culture unprecedented in the region (Fortin 1995; MacNaull 1997, 1998).

These ideas were key in the campaign conducted by The Economic Development Commission, and the Regional District of Central Okanagan to sell the Okanagan a Call Centre, ironically the lowest form of 'tech' industry and closer to a sweatshop than to the myth of a high-tech company. As part of the campaign to promote the area for a Call Centre, the Economic Development Commission designed a briefcase of full size in leather-like carton paper, complete with stickers and containing a passport and postcards with different pieces of advertisement (Figure 2). The briefcase cost $25,000 for 3,000 copies (MacNaull 2000). The outside of the briefcase shows destination stickers, symbolising the countries to which this piece of propaganda was directed: Australia, Japan, France, Germany, Europe, Canada, USA, Ireland, Italy, Austria and London. It read:

We've traveled the globe

to find the best location

to your Call entre.

The right people,

the right place,

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the right decision.

The briefcase plays with the existing accepted discourse by emphasising over and over again that 'Kelowna's spectacular natural beauty' is attractive. But then it points to the characteristics of the Okanagan that exists beyond a 'playful' and 'joyous' façade. It turns out that there is another advantage to relocating to the city. The groups that control it are indeed aware of the area's true nature, and they boast, 'low costs and economic diversity are just a few reasons why it's the fastest growing city in Western Canada'. The postcards attached to the briefcase, point to the technical environmental advantages mixed with the availability of a low-paid labour force. One of the postcards, not particularly inventive, offers a World Class Telecommunications Infrastructure collage of high-tech symbols. It reads: The telecommunications infrastructure servicing the Central Okanagan is one of the most sophisticated and highly advanced fibre optic, wireless and digital networks in the world'. A second postcard shows a lake, a bridge over the lake, the rural character of Kelowna's downtown, the entertainment of its simulated (and very limited) waterfront with an arena and the only two or three high-rises overlooking the Okanagan Lake. Meanwhile, the mill on the north end of the downtown is strategically left out of the picture frame. The back of the stamp emphasises the separation-integration of Kelowna, on the one hand, away from the large urban centres, and on the other, close to the global economy with its access abroad. But above all, it codes a disciplined, docile, low-waged labour force living in this area of high unemployment and little access to work. The postcard calls this a diversified economic base. It reads: The region is not dependent on any one industry, resulting in a diversified and skilled workforce that is well-educated, eager to work and looking for long-term employment'. The third postcard offers what again has been the logic of the industries of retirement and tourism, 'lifestyle' and recreation. The picture in the postcard has references to orchards, golfing, sailing, skiing, hiking, and in a corner, the library, the symphony orchestra and the suburban single family and multifamily housing: The quality of life that the Central Okanagan offers is a significant factor for attracting and retaining business and qualified staff.

The new worker is assumed to be neither political nor interested in good food, foreign films or decent wages. Rather, a new normalcy has been attributed to people, a longing for play and the simplicity of rural life. Contra Marx, in this discursive deployment, human beings are not presented as producers or social beings, but rather, they are sketched as fun seekers, consumers, a type of ludic child-like individual who just seeks mindless leisure and play in their commodified forms: 'People and business are naturally drawn.. .for climate, clean environment.. .recreational activities in this four season playground. Only in the Okanagan-downhill skiing and golfing-both in the same day!.. .wilderness, parks, mountain resorts for hiking, hiking and relaxing. Spectacular lakes.. .for water sport...'. In the most recent civic election campaign, one of the candidate's placards announcing his candidacy stood out with a campaign slogan: 'Live-Work-Play'.

The package for the call centre also offers 2,000 hours of sunshine annually. The briefcase emphasises that 'the Okanagan is well-known [for].. .hot summers and temperate winters...'. In passing, there is a perfunctory reference to Kelowna offering the amenities that are at the core of large urban centres' selling efforts. The city boosters remind the potential interested parties that the area also has 'theatre groups, art galleries, sport and entertainment facilities to a host of ethnic restaurants and cultural events...'. However, a semirural, idyllic character is emphasised around housing, as part of the outdoors fun: 'diversity of housing . ..acreage, and developments...to enjoy a rural existence close to a downtown area'. And the propaganda insists on the image of people as child-like seekers of fun by showing a picture of the marina at the yacht club with a caption 'Everything that you could possible ask for!'.

However, after offering and emphasising fun and games, outdoors, rurality and health as selling strategy, the image of a place appears not so benign with workers in this piece of advertising. The fun stops here. It hints that fun and games, outdoor sports and propitious weather are just for a few. The attraction for business in Kelowna is the opposite of fun and pleasure. It is a high unemployment rate and low costs, a docile and large reserve army of unemployed. Kelowna was offered to global business because at that time the minimum hourly wage was US$5.00, because the Population Annual Growth Rate was 3.40 percent and because the official unemployment rate was 9 percent. This latter figure can be as much as 2 percentage points above the provincial average (Sherrell and Hyndman 2004). In sum, the campaign emphasised that there was a 'large pool of educated and dedicated workers readily available. Okanagan University College offers both college and university programs to its nearly 40,000 [sic] students. Early retirees are also drawn to the area...'.

At some point in the campaign, the codes were simply shed. The passport in the briefcase made crystal clear that the Central Okanagan labour force. '.. .shines with talent and dedication', and that it is seemingly white, Anglo-Saxon, a workforce that is 'personable and polite with a neutral accent" (our emphases).

Thus, the Okanagan purports to offer a new type of industrial reserve army of labour. A child-like fun loving, play-oriented, set of skiers who form 'a LABOUR-POOL well stocked with workers of all ages' (emphasis in

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original). That is, the young kids that cannot afford to go away to university and the older semi-retirees who have not found an eternal vacation and fun in their retirement after all. This is an army of apolitical labourers, white (what else can a neutral accent mean?), with few options and thus 'eager to fulfil full and part-time positions. Two categories: young university or college students from local public and private post-secondary institutions, highly motivated to entry level labour source; as a retirement location is rich in mature, experienced early retirees, looking for a career change' (our emphasis).

But it is not just in the effort to attract a call centre that the message of fun and cheap white workers is highlighted. There was, for example, a commercial poster displayed at the airport over the luggage carrousels (Figure 3). The Economic Development Commission and Regional District of Central Okanagan (http://www.edccord.com) was responsible for this piece of advertisement. The poster represents a white male in a business suit with a large briefcase. The caption read: 'Welcome to Kelowna, the most cost-effective place to do business in the Pacific Region'. Of course, the message was meant to reaffirm the low costs of labour. However, more importantly, the poster plays with the symbols of fun of the Okanagan. The background depicted what seemed to be the shore of the Okanagan Lake, with a lawn by the water, blue waters, mountains and blue skies. The tall white man in his business suit stretches his arms to show his astonishment and willingness to embrace the natural attributes of place. In fact, he may be interpreted as being in a position of thanking God for the opportunities, fitting the Christian fundamentalism that characterises the area. The juxtaposition of a white male figure, nature and background is designed to appeal to white business gazes. It is not by chance that it is at the airport, the gateway of the business traveller, to attract business and reassure that there is a business climate that is cheap, peaceful and playful, natural and pristine, sunny and ecological.

Still, amidst all place selling, the area was at that time in a profound crisis. Place selling, cheap labour and whiteness were not enough to retain large economic ventures in the hinterlands. Freightliner announced the closing of its Western Star Trucks in October 2001. With it, and the cyclical crisis of the lumber mills in the area, the last blue-collar workers with Fordist wages in full-time positions rapidly disappeared. The closing of Western Star represented the symbolic end of an old working class. It also showed that the restructuring and concentration of world manufacturing is stronger than place selling. Nor climate, play, or whiteness were obstacles for Freightliner, a Daimler-Chrysler subsidiary, to pay $670 million in the year 2000 with the sole goal of closing the plant-an intention that they vehemently denied (Daily Courier, 11 October 2001). However, although the selling of place does not seem to retain investment, it appears to have achieved hegemonic status among workers. In fact, the shutting down of the company did not cause a ripple in the community. After all, the workers in the Okanagan Valley live in a depoliticised world, where they actually see only the fun and pleasure of life in what is for them the last frontier of nature and whiteness. But the downturn in the economy of Kelowna was not restricted to the Old industries' of manufacturing, forestry and mining. Even the 'pioneering' high-tech sector imperilled many workers in Kelowna. BC Telus, a telephone service company, let go 380 employees in 2003 (Murray 2003), and Bridges.com, an Internet career-planning company, has been repeatedly laying-off office employees in Kelowna (MacNaull 2002). Some perceptive workers have begun to read the writing on the wall with comments like the following: Tm optimistic something will turn up for me in the new-year, but if I have to, I'll move out of Kelowna. I can't eat fresh air and scenery' (Seymour 2002).

Conclusion

The effects of the new forms of capital accumulation that have taken place in the last twenty years have not been smooth. In many ways, post-Fordism has resulted in deep transformations not only at economic, political and discursive levels, but also in our understandings and valorisations of space and place. As a result, employment is being redefined, work re-organised, and the easy divisions of urban, suburban and rural areas of the sixties and seventies have given way to more fluid, 'flexible' manners of apprehending place. As post-Fordism gives priority to the space of consumption over production, an important interest in place making and the selling of these ideas becomes paramount. This is an era of globalised capital, where diverse localities are reinventing themselves to attract and retain investment in their communities. Kelowna, BC, is no exception in this strategy. We have argued that the reinvention of Kelowna has been organised in part via four overlapping discourses-Kelowna as retirement location, playground, white space and high-tech site. This identifies the city's 'competitive advantage', which otherwise lacks many infrastructural components necessary for the development of high-tech industries. 'Lifestyle' is woven in all discourses and means an all-year playground that is also 'secure' and 'familiar' to the new 'pioneers' marking out a vision of the future for Kelowna. This vision, we caution, is centred on 'whiteness' and equally based on the exploitation of low-waged workers who increasingly face difficult prospects in a city seriously hit by the restructuring of its regional economy. Kelowna's changing political economy means for workers hard and unpredictable economic times ahead as the old industries restructure and move out of the area, while the promises of the new industries reveal themselves to be mostly hype, with no long-term prospects for high-paying jobs. While these uncertain times grip the city and its surrounding area, a progressive political movement able to politicise working-class

precariousness in the econoscape has yet to develop. Such a development is absolutely critical, as Kelowna, in particular, becomes increasingly class polarised.

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Nonetheless, a number of questions arise from the commodification of places and the competition between producers of place. How to 'sell' a place in an exceedingly competitive market? Who does 'sell' place? How is place constructed as a commodity for sale? Is it solely place that is sold? Or, is it also a bundle of social relations fetishised to be sold as place? Florida (2002) approaches these questions by arguing that a new social class is emerging in our times, what he calls the 'Creative Class'. This class has 'shaped and continues to shape deep and profound shifts in the way we work, in our values and desires, and in the very fabric of our everyday lives' (Florida 2002). According to him, the creative class has the power to attract capital. His view is that instead of jobs forcing people to relocate, companies relocate or form where skilled, creative people are already settled and are already thriving. For Florida, the creative class is 'the norm-setting class of our times'. Its norms are based on 'individuality, self-expression, and openness to difference'. Hence, for him the essential question is to know what type of place has the 'quality' that makes it appealing to the creative class. This class is formed, among others, by people with specialisations as varied as science, engineering, architecture, design, education, arts, music and entertainment. As the economic function of this class is 'to create ideas, new technologies, and new creative content' in a variety of areas and as in their work, the members of the creative class must engage in challenging and complex problem solving that requires a great deal of independent judgement, high levels of education. Factors like autonomy, openness and flexibility are essential in their lives. For Florida, this constitutes 'quality of place' (italics in original). The elements of such a place are a 'combination of the built environment and the natural environment; a proper setting for pursuit of creative lives.. .[a place that offers] the vibrancy of street life, café culture, arts, music and.. .outdoor activities-altogether a lot of active, exciting, creative endeavours'. In sum, Florida emphasises a love for 'diversity', from having access to 'ethnic' food and culture, to having contact and working with people from different parts of the world, to welcoming gay and lesbian 'lifestyles', both at work and in the social scene. But Florida is too optimistic on the Openness' of the creative class, leaving unexamined the economic and ideological gap that develops between core (the creative class) and peripheral workers in the post-Fordist workplace ([Harvey] 1989; Legge 1995; Moody 1997). In addition, he is positively convinced that the new petite bourgeoisie is inviting, accommodating and open to 'difference'. However, 'fear of the other', as Harvey reminds us (Harvey 1996; also see below), crosscuts class. Confronted with Florida's argument then, we wonder whether hinterland-type cities would ever be able to offer the quality of place that, he says, appeals to the creative class. If they do not, especially in 'skill-deficient' locations, what would make these places enticing to capital and new businesses anyways? Below, we showcase Kelowna's attempt to entice and secure capital.A keen interest in place making and place selling is widespread in contemporary society. While the bulk of academic research has focused on studying the restructuring of large urban conglomerates, places beyond the exploding metropolis, by comparison, have received little attention, especially when it concerns Canadian landscapes. In an attempt to study the particularities of place making in contemporary smaller, more isolated communities-hinterlands-this work analyses the city of Kelowna, in British Columbia, Canada. We argue that historically Kelowna, a small rural community specialising in ranching, forestry and fruit production, since the early 1980s, has been re-imagined and re-designed, on the one hand as an all-year playground and as an innovative frontier for high-tech industries; on the other hand, this post-Fordist reinvention contains a discourse

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of 'whiteness', one that entices by packaging 'place' in terms of 'sameness' and 'familiarity'. In contrast to large cosmopolitan post-industrial cities, hinterland-type cities are invented, sought and lived as geographies cleared from the 'elements' that make cities 'unsafe'. [PUBLICATION ABSTRACT]

RF Copyright Blackwell Publishing Summer 2005 | 1 An exception is Fawcett (2003) who deals with Prince George, British Columbia. | 2 Urry (2002) defines this class thus: The service class consists of that set of places within the social division of labour whose occupants do not own capital or land to any substantial degree; are located within a set of interlocking social institutions which collectively 'service' capital; enjoy superior work and market situations generally resulting from the existence of well-defined careers, either within or between organisations; and have their envy regulated by the differential possession of educational credentials. These serve to demarcate the service class from more general white-collar workers and generate distinctions of cultural capital and taste. | 3 However, in Kelowna there is a 'cultural district' in the downtown area ( ). | 4 In mid-June 2003, a 'rural summit' (. bc.ca) was held in Clearwater, British Columbia to discuss the impact of globalisation, provincial political priorities and solutions to the restructuring of the province's interior. Also in 2003, the BC government announced its 'heartland economy' strategy for the interior of the province. Many are skeptical of this economic plan and its benefits to the numerous communities. | 5 There are seventeen golf courses in Kelowna (Tourism Kelowna 2002). | 6 According to Mr. Munro, Vancouver was often referred to as 'HongCouver' mixing the origin of many immigrant from Hong Kong with the suffix of the city name (Munro 2000). | 7 In addition to Kelowna, the other cities were Fredericton, Waterloo, Calgary and Victoria. | 8 In March 2004, the liberal government announced that by 1 September 2005, the University of British Columbia would take over the academic programs of Okanagan University College establishing University of British Columbia at Okanagan in Kelowna. | LUIS LM. AGUIAR | Department of Sociology, University of British Columbia-Okanagan, Kelowna, British Columbia, Canada (e-mail: ImaguiariSouc.bc.ca) | PATRICIA TOMIC | Department of Sociology, University of British Columbia-Okanagan, Kelowna, British Columbia, Canada (e-mail: ptomic@ouc.bc.ca) | RICARDO TRUMPER | Department of Sociology, University of British Columbia-Okanagan, Kelowna, British Columbia, Canada (e-mail: rtrumper@ouc.bc.ca)

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